



BlueCross BlueShield of Florida

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NEWS RELEASE

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CONTACT: Bruce Middlebrooks
PHONE: (904) 905-3400
CELL: (904) 803-6795

BLUE CROSS AND BLUE SHIELD OF FLORIDA WINS STEVIE® AWARD IN 4TH ANNUAL AMERICAN BUSINESS AWARDSSM

JACKSONVILLE, Fla. – Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida (BCBSF) won the Stevie Award for the Best Corporate Social Responsibility Program at the 2006 American Business Awards held in New York City on June 12. The award recognizes *Generation RN*, BCBSF's innovative initiative designed to ease Florida's nursing shortage.

Generation RN is a public/private partnership initiated by BCBSF to build an expanded, stable and culturally diverse nurse workforce in Florida. Combined with state matching dollars and other private support, BCBSF-endowed scholarships fund the education of more than 200 nursing students every year. Endowed professorships, graduate student scholarships, and support for innovative programs help ensure sustained growth in nursing.

Hailed as "the business world's own Oscars" by the *New York Post* (April 27, 2005), The American Business Awards are the only national, all-encompassing business awards program honoring great performances in the workplace. Nicknamed the Stevies for the Greek word "crowned," the awards were presented during ceremonies at the Marriott Marquis Hotel in New York City. The ceremonies were hosted by CNN business news anchor Ali Velshi, videocast live on the Internet, and broadcast nationwide on radio.

In accepting the Stevie Award, Cyrus M. Jollivette, BCBSF's senior vice president for public affairs said, "Florida's nursing shortage today stands at 34,000 and is expected to reach 61,000 by 2020. By focusing our philanthropic resources, Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida is working to strengthen, build and sustain a vibrant nurse workforce and fulfill our mission to advance the health and well-being of all Floridians."

"Nurses are the backbone of health care in our communities, and Generation RN is aimed at easing a critical shortage in the state of Florida," said Catherine Kelly, vice president for public affairs signature programs. "The success of the program is only possible through the vision and commitment of state legislators, educators, hospital executives and other health industry leaders to work together for the common good."

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